

after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, which had become official January 1, 1863. Thus it was on Juneteenth that the African American slaves of Texas and other parts of the South celebrated the final execution of the Emancipation Proclamation, giving them their freedom forever.

The celebration of Juneteenth which has not until recently received its rightful day of national appreciation is not only a showcase of the African American community's positive contributions to the American way of life, but it also makes a statement for all Americans that the United States is truly the "Land of the Free." Juneteenth is an expression and extension of American freedom and, like the Fourth of July, a time for all Americans to celebrate our independence, human rights, civil rights and freedom.

A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO BETTY JO
SHERMAN ON HER NFRW TRIB-
UTE NOMINATION

HON. PAUL E. GILLMOR

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. GILLMOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to pay special tribute to an outstanding citizen from Ohio's Fifth Congressional District. Betty Jo Sherman will be honored by the Ohio Chapter of the National Federation of Republican Women on Sunday, June 23, 2002 for her continued dedication to the electoral process.

Mr. Speaker, Betty Jo is celebrating this monumental occasion with family, friends, and colleagues, all who have known of her selfless contributions to the U.S. electoral system. Serving a democratic institution was not only Betty Jo's duty but also her honor. These opportunities to contribute to a fundamentally American responsibility have brought her a lifetime of both personal and professional achievement. Betty Jo truly is a valued citizen of the State of Ohio.

Betty Jo continues to lead a distinguished career as an advocate for the participation in American political process, which is made evident through the numerous positions she has held within the local and state Republican Party. She has also served her local community by becoming the first woman to be elected to the Woodmore, Ohio Board of Education. Betty Jo has been active in the electoral process since the early 1970's and tirelessly continues to serve both the interests of that system and those of her local community. These achievements demonstrate not only that Betty Jo is dedicated to the strong ideals of the American electoral process, but also to the vision of our founding fathers.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in paying special tribute to Betty Jo Sherman. Our democratic institutions are served well by having such honorable and giving citizens, like Betty Jo, who care about the active participation of all Americans in the electoral process. I am confident that Betty Jo will continue to serve her community as an advocate of citizen participation in the American electoral system well into the future. We wish her the very best on this special occasion.

HONORING JANET COHN OF
CONNECTICUT

HON. JOHN B. LARSON

OF CONNECTICUT

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. LARSON of Connecticut. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor and pay tribute to Janet Cohn of Connecticut, who died on April 25th at 92 years young. Mrs. Cohn was the wife of the late Yale Cohn, who passed away in 1995, and mother of the Secretary of the Connecticut State Democratic party. She was an active member of the League of Women Voters as well as various other West Hartford organizations.

Born in New York City, Mrs. Cohn moved to Connecticut where she skipped two grades and graduated from Rockville High School as class valedictorian at the age of 16. From there she went on to work at the Aetna Insurance Company due to the fact that college was financially out of the question.

At Aetna, her exceptional skill as a typist was widely known as well as her tendency to distract most of her gentleman co-workers with her flapper skirts, as she would gleefully report to all those who inquired.

Mrs. Cohn met Yale at a dance for Jewish singles and married in 1933. Soon after, her skills in the workplace caused the company to break its then longstanding policy of firing female employees after they married. After she left Aetna, she took up the books at her husband's fish store, the Bostonian Fishery.

A self-proclaimed "old fashioned girl," Mrs. Cohn refused to bow to the increase in technology over the years, which meant that she never used a videotape recorder or flew in a plane. Her lack of travel only increased her focus on the welfare of her community. After moving to West Hartford in 1964, she became chairwoman of her voting district, pitching in wherever she felt that she was needed most.

In addition to her love of politics, Mrs. Cohn found time for her love of painting, making hand painted cards for the birthdays of all of the many members of her family. She even found the time to serve as a Justice of the Peace, a role she gladly played at the age of 91 for her own granddaughter's wedding ceremony. She leaves behind two daughters, four grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Janet Cohn was an exceptional human being whose love of life was contagious to all those she came into contact with. She will truly be missed by the community she served for so many years, but most of all by her loving family.

THE PLIGHT OF HAITIAN AND
AFRICAN REFUGEES

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, though the events of September 11 were a tragic and unbelievable experience for almost all of us in this country, some of the policies and security measures that we are creating and enforcing because of it go against the principles that we as a nation stand for. The freedoms that many

countries deny their citizens, but we allow to ours, has been the reason that we have been able to shine as the great nation that we are. The responsibility that we have taken on by assisting victims of terror and oppression have separated us from other countries and again helped us to create a nation dedicated to the welfare of all peoples. However as a result of 9-11, we have started to retract on these policies. And though they may be grounded in a fear that is all too real, retracting on our principles and ideals will not remove that fear, nor will it solve the problem. Two groups that have been affected the most by some of the new policies and/or security measures are two groups that need it the most. Haitian and African refugees are suffering in their homelands and are turning to the U.S. for aid, nonetheless, we are turning them away and/or allowing them to enter the U.S. and continue their suffering in detainment centers. Will we allow ourselves to succumb to the laws of other countries that deny people their rights and ability to live as free civilized peoples?

In December, the Administration initiated a policy, which detains all Haitians seeking asylum in Miami. This policy is unmistakably discriminatory: 91 percent of refugees from other nations are given parole in American communities while they seek asylum, while Haitians who have been granted asylum often remain in detention. The policy's objective, to deter Haitians from risking their lives to come to the U.S. by boat, has not been successful. Many Haitians are not aware of this new policy and some choose to face detainment here rather than face terrorism at home. In fact, approximately 97 percent of Haitians seeking asylum are detained. For a country that was built on a historical acceptance of refugees, does it make logical sense that we treat refugees in this manner? Most Americans' ancestors came here escaping problems in their homelands as well, yet were not treated with the same disdain. Yet this goes beyond disdain, these people lack the basic rights that we as a country preach that everyone should have. These people are detained in facilities that have surpassed their maximum limit. They are not given ample time to obtain legal assistance or prepare and file their claim of asylum. They are not given sufficient medical care. Their children are denied educational services and are not allowed recreational time outdoors. They are housed with criminal prisoners even though they themselves are not. Their human rights are being violated. It is important that we ensure the due process and equal protection to Haitians asylum seekers as they turn to us for help.

The treatment of African refugees is equally problematic. According to the Interaction's Committee on Migration and Refugee Affairs, almost 50 percent of the world's 25 million internally displaced persons are in Africa, yet we only allow 31 percent of all refugees admitted to the U.S. are African. And, because the Department of State has consistently not processed refugees, we have not been able to reach our refugee allocations throughout the 1980s and 90s. For the Fiscal Year 2002, the allocation for Africa was 22,000 yet only 891 African refugees were admitted into the country. In 1999, \$120 was spent on a refugee from Yugoslavia, whereas \$35 was spent on one refugee from Africa. If African refugees are in greater need why are their needs being neglected?

Witness the case of Melrose Coker, an African refugee from Sierra Leone, who has languished in two different refugee camps since 1999. She and her children have been subjected to hazardous labor exploitation, physical abuse, denial of education, sexual violence and exploitation. While trying to survive hardships in one of these camps, Melrose was able to make contact with her family in the United States. Her mother was deeply troubled and saddened by the hardships Melrose and her family suffered in Guinea. She could not sit back and watch while her daughter and grandchildren suffered. She therefore petitioned for Melrose and her family to be provided with visas to travel to the United States, for purposes of family reunification and resettlement. This petition was filed with a local refugee agency in New York City in 1999. Several months passed and no feed-back was received from the agency handling the petition. Several petitions have been filed by Melrose's family in the United States, with various agencies and UNECR, to resettle Melrose's family in the United States. Thus far, all of these efforts have been unsuccessful. Inquiries into the status of her case have all produced no information or response. Meanwhile, Melrose and her family continue to perish while putting their lives at risk everyday, living in fear, poverty and squalor. Melrose's voice is reaching out of the depths of darkness and misery and is crying out to us today. Not only has Melrose's family suffered some of the worst atrocities ever recorded in the world during the war in Sierra Leone, but they continue to remain at risk in the refugee camps in Guinea—where they are supposed to find safety. I, therefore, appeal to you to listen to Melrose's voice calling from beyond the tents of refugee camps in Guinea. I urge you to take on the challenge to protect her and resettle and reunify her with her family in the United States.

Finally, Haitian and African refugees are in dire need of our help and as we close our doors to their pleas or continue to allow them to be mistreated in our own nation, we join alliances with those that are for the inhumane treatment of human beings. Have we not dedicated ourselves to promoting the freedom of those deprived of rights that we believe are inherent to human life? The answer is yes. The United States has been a leader in the protection of refugees and as we decline in our dedication to those that need our aid so do the rest of the resettlement countries. We must remember the events of September 11th and learn how to prevent them, but we cannot do so at the cost of the lives of others. We were attacked on that day because of our principles, if we retract on them, we our only allowing ourselves to lose in the war on terrorism. The Haitian and African refugees need our help; let us stand up for what we believe in and give them the rights that they deserve.

TRIBUTE TO MS. SALLY SCHMITZ

HON. JERRY WELLER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer congratulations to Ms. Sally Schmitz on the occasion of her retirement after an exceptional career as the Administrative Assistant

and Office Manager of the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry (OAC).

For the past fifteen years, Ms. Schmitz has served the business community and citizens of the City of Ottawa in an outstanding fashion—oftentimes providing the behind-the-scenes coordination for many of the City of Ottawa's most attractive and successful events.

Some of these key events made successful in large part because of Ms. Schmitz's organizational abilities include the Ottawa Area Chamber's sold-out annual meeting banquet at Starved Rock Lodge; the OAC's Business Expo and BIP Golf Outing; the huge Welcomeburger community event; many Riverfest activities and the expanding Farmers Market.

In addition to coordinating these key events which have enhanced and enriched the quality of life in the City of Ottawa, Ms. Schmitz has played a vital role over the years in helping the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry develop into a vigorous and effective organization. For example, Ms. Schmitz's work to maintain an efficient office operation while supporting OAC membership recruitment and retention efforts have been absolutely critical to the success of the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I am proud and pleased to be able to offer to my colleagues in the United States House of Representatives the example of Ms. Sally Schmitz as an outstanding community servant whose work during the course of her career has helped build the Ottawa Area Chamber of Commerce and Industry into perhaps the leading public service organization in the City of Ottawa.

IN RECOGNITION OF JACK LOFTIS

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to honor Jack Loftis, the longtime Associate Publisher and Editor of the Houston Chronicle, who will officially retire on July 1, 2002, after serving nearly 50 years in Texas journalism.

A native of Hillsboro, Texas, Jack Loftis began his journalism career as a sportswriter for the Hillsboro Daily Mirror while still attending Baylor University, where he received a BBA degree in the spring of 1957. Soon after he was named editor of the paper in 1962. Mr. Loftis joined the Houston Chronicle in 1965 as a copy editor and five years later became editor of the Texas Magazine, the paper's Sunday rotogravure section. In 1972, he was promoted to features editor and began his rise through the newspaper's executive ranks and in 1974 was named assistant managing editor. Promoted to assistant editor in 1979 and vice president and editor in 1987, Jack Loftis gained the additional titles of executive vice president in 1990 and associate publisher in 1998. At the age of 67, Mr. Loftis has been the Chronicle's ranking editor during the past 15 years and the ninth in the Chronicle's 100-year history. His tenure is second only to that of M. E. Foster, who founded the paper in 1901 and served as its editor for 26 years.

Throughout his career Jack Loftis has remained involved in a number of organizations aimed at improving the Houston community.

He is a founding director of Crime Stoppers of Houston, Inc., Vice President of the Chronicle's Goodfellows holiday charity and a former member of both the Houston READ Commission and the Clean Houston Commission. Mr. Loftis, along with his wife Beverly has been involved in activities connected with the Lone Star Chapter of the Multiple Sclerosis Society, Friends of the West University Park and Citizens for Animal Protection.

Jack Loftis' exemplary model of community activism has earned him the respect and praise of his colleagues, community leaders and countless community organizations. He was the recipient of the United Way Loving Hand Award (1994); the Headliners Foundation of Texas' Lifetime Achievement Award (1995); Honorary chairman of the 1995 Inaugural Committee; Newspaper Features Hall of Fame (1997); the Freedom of the Information Foundation of Texas' James Madison Award (1999); and the Pulitzer Prize Nominating Juror (1999 and 2000).

Honored as a Baylor Distinguished Alumnus in 1988, Loftis was a member of the school's Sesquicentennial Council of 150 during 1993–95 and received the Baylor Communications Award in 1997. He currently is a member of the executive committee of the Baylor Alumni Association and chairs the advisory board for The Baylor Line, the association's quarterly magazine. Also, in recognition of his legacy, Baylor University has named the press box at its newly constructed Baylor Ballpark stadium in Jack Loftis' honor.

Jack Loftis recently summed up his career best by saying: "Since the day I walked in the Chronicle my intention has been to do what was best for the community, this newspaper and this staff. I hope I have succeeded more times than I have failed." Mr. Speaker there is no question that Jack Loftis has succeeded in improving our city, state and nation and establishing the Houston Chronicle as one of America's leading daily newspapers. Throughout his tenure, Jack witnessed and reported on the tremendous growth of Houston and Texas, the rise (and sometimes the fall) of its leaders and every day lives of the people who make up our great nation. Committed to the truth and a free, open, and democratic society, he has never shied away from reporting the news and expressing an opinion regardless of controversy or consternation. Mr. Speaker, I congratulate my friend on his tremendous career and commend him on a job well done.

DENTAL AMALGAM SAFETY

HON. C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER

OF IDAHO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, June 20, 2002

Mr. OTTER. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to support the continued recognition of Amalgam as a safe and appropriate material to be used in dental fillings.

Numerous studies conducted by a diverse assortment of health research organizations including the National Institutes of Health, the World Health Organization, the U.S. Public Health Service, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention all confirm that the use of Amalgam in dental fillings is safe. With the costs of healthcare already soaring it is important to protect those treatments that have a